

Utah Elementary Language Arts Core Curriculum Kindergarten-Sixth Grade

Introduction

The ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, is essential for success in our society. The broad strands of reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and presenting form the core of language and literacy learning. To become literate citizens in the twenty-first century, students need teachers who will deliver dynamic, systematic, and meaningful classroom instruction while providing students with numerous opportunities to apply literacy skills in contextualized and purposeful ways.

The topics and strands in the Utah Elementary Language Arts Core Curriculum, as well as the standards and objectives, reflect current research in the area of literacy. It is expected that teachers will provide both instruction and application of these standards across all areas of the elementary curriculum, not only during the language arts block. For example, literacy instruction, as a tool for learning and communicating, should be infused daily into science, social studies, mathematics, the arts, and healthy lifestyles content.

While the strands and topics in this Core Curriculum are presented in isolation for purposes of clarity, they are intended to be taught naturally through an integrated model of instruction. Listening and speaking, for example, do not occur independent of one another. Reading and writing are reciprocal and should be taught together. Viewing and presenting often involve a combination of the spoken and written word. In addition, the use of visuals and graphics enhances the meaning and understanding of text. An effective language arts program integrates all aspects of literacy and helps students understand the connectedness of language and content. Finally, the responsibility of teaching all students to read, write, and communicate effectively, as well as value literacy, is a shared responsibility. Educators, parents, guardians, and members of the community are all stakeholders in developing a literate society.

Organization of the Elementary Language Arts Core

The Utah Elementary Language Arts Core Curriculum's organization is as follows:

- There are eight standards for the Utah Elementary Language Arts Core Curriculum.
- Each standard represents one of the essential areas of reading instruction.
- Accompanying introductions are provided for each of the eight standards. The introductions provide information regarding the importance of each of the eight areas of reading instruction according to scientifically based research. As part of each introduction, there are suggestions for teacher delivery, assessment, differentiation, and home connections.
- Each standard has objectives at the K-6 grade level.

Organization of the Elementary Language Arts Core (Continued)

- Each objective has indicators noting what students should know and be able to do at each grade level.
- The Utah Elementary Language Arts Core Curriculum is organized in two sections. Each section may be utilized according to personal preference or need. The first section is organized as a scope and sequence chart of K-6 grade objectives and indicators.
- The word “mastery” is used in the scope and sequence chart. Mastery indicates that students should have mastered the indicators at the previous level. The second section of the Core Curriculum is organized according to grade level standards, objectives, and indicators.
- A STANDARD is a broad statement of what students are expected to understand. Several objectives are listed under each standard.
- An OBJECTIVE is a more focused description of what students need to know and be able to do at the completion of instruction. If students have mastered the objectives associated with a given standard, they are judged to have mastered that standard at that grade level. Several indicators are described for each objective.
- An INDICATOR is a measurable or observable student action that enables one to judge whether a student has mastered a particular objective. Indicators are not meant to be classroom activities, but help to guide classroom instruction.